Are You Feeling Bouquet?

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Are You Feeling Bouquet?

by amoralagent

Summary

A lowkey Hannigram fic inspired by a tumblr prompt: Person A owns a Flower Shop and Person B comes storming in one day, slams twenty bucks on the counter, and says "How do I passive-aggressively say fuck you in flower?" because who doesn't want to read that? You're totally welcome.

He'd had a shit day.

Of course, being Hannibal, he wouldn't describe it in such a way- he'd probably use more academic terms, like egregious or unpropitious, but anyone else would've said it as it was: fucking tragic.

In his first few stumbling moments awake his ridiculously expensive coffee machine decided that he didn't deserve French-press today, by not only refusing to work but going as far as to throw up it's contents in what could be described as a mini explosion. Perfect timing really, as his lateness in opening had meant he'd dressed before breakfast, thinking he had just enough time to grab a good ol' cuppa Joe, then facing betrayal and having to change. On his way out of the door, when the coffee incident was near enough forgotten, he checked a message on his phone from his new assistant Jimmy who sounded extremely hungover but babbled about how he'd be off for a few days with "the flu"; he'd shrugged it off as excusable, thinking business was recently slow and easy and would stay that way.

Little did he know, the first customer of the day was a very mournful young woman looking for funeral garlands. Just the thing to improve his mood! She even started crying in the middle of deciding between white lilies and hydrangeas, an exasperated Hannibal having to herd her to the back room in front of the other concerned customers and trying unenthusiastically to console her with a box of tissues and his best sympathy eyes. He was practically robbed of a hug as she took his hand on her shoulder as an invite.

Better yet, a call came in directly after that whole ordeal from a strangely infuriated man who had a menagerie of complaints regarding a delivery of flowers. Jimmy had prepared them when Hannibal had left him to his devices- some time last week, if memory serves- almost definitely, or there wouldn't be anything to criticise. Hannibal certainly wouldn't create or send anything that wasn't faultless.

After telling that to the man in the ever-calm manner that could only be attributed to having the best self-control in existence, that apparently wasn't enough because they proceeded to argue for another ten minutes until he was hung up on. Disgustingly rude, he thought. Maybe he could get his business card.

The rest of the morning was banal, filled with natural humdrum and the occasional window-shopping couple sick with love and freshness. He may or may not have visualised their shared tableau. Sustaining his usual relaxed neutrality was becoming surprisingly difficult. To think he went into floristry, as advised by his psychiatrist, as a means to avoid stress and calamity. What a rip-off.

Halfway through the afternoon, just as he was contemplating how many ways he could murder someone using a wreath frame, the bell on the door signalled the arrival of a rather unkempt but strikingly attractive man; in a tired, *I-don't-try-but-I-still-look-like-model-material* kinda way. Hannibal was instantly intrigued. It seems he entered the shop in a flurried temper, then somewhat stifling himself in a big sigh, turning to muse over the various bouquets, still visibly upset. Rubbing a hand across his forehead, it seems he could sense

Hannibal's enrapt staring, misty eyes flitting up to find his, fussing with his pocket until he stormed over to the desk and promptly slammed twenty bucks on the counter.

"How do I passive-aggressively say fuck you in flower?"

This encounter would have anyone taken aback, and even Hannibal was slightly startled, but he quickly breezed over it and quelled a smile as he guided him to the aconites and carnations: "Aconites- or, monkweed- despite their beauty, translate into symbolising hatred, as do orange lilies, and can represent the warning of 'be cautious.' We also have yellow carnations and petunia which synonymously present anger and resentment- even rejection." The fidgeting man nodded thoughtfully, stroking a thumb across a petal gently despite himself.

Hannibal continued on: "Cyclamen is deceptive in it's use of supposedly happy colours, instead being a perfect metaphor for separation. Similarly, butterfly weed means 'leave me', if that's the intended outcome, but we don't have those in store at the moment. Would you like me to order some for you?"

The man appeared minutely flustered, before scowling further and waving a hand: "Nah, don't bother. If you'd just throw all those into a bouquet for me I'll be tickled pink in more ways than one." That was intended to sound exactly as it did, much to Hannibal's subdued discomfort and intrigue.

"May I ask the occasion?" He queried, carefully choosing and cutting each bloom.

A shrug, "Nothing to gossip over, just a stern and overzealous boss- well, ex-boss- who'd always be up my ass about things. Mad, all the time. Nearly drove *me* mad." He seemed too sincere about that comment, "Finally quit, given the opportunity. Thought I'd thank him for his trouble." His tone was indifferent, if clearly annoyed. He smiled, half-heartedly, watching Hannibal's hands as he arranged and wrapped them the flowers, drumming his fingers on the counter. Hannibal smiled back.

"Office job?" He suggested, realising he had folded back into a pretty psychiatric line of questioning, "Bosses are normally punishing. Especially there."

"No. Homicide unit. FBI, even- I know: *me? This guy? An agent for federal investigations?*" He was joking, not entirely shown on his face, but Hannibal gave an amused hum. He rolled his eyes, leaning up against the surface and scratching his stubbled jaw. The way he couldn't stay still was obvious he wanted things to hurry up, and Hannibal allowed him that, "Too fucked up to pass the screening anyway." He mumbled, mostly to himself, notably disinterested in Hannibal's countenance.

Hannibal would've normally been repulsed by such uncouth language but it wasn't exactly unbecoming on him. A given, under the circumstance. He tweaked the display before offering it for approval, earning another half-smile as he grabbed it from him: "That'll be sixteen dollars."

"Whatever. Keep the change." He promptly ignored any further opportunities for conversation by turning away. And just like that, he was gone.

Hannibal was left with naught but the fascination from a disgruntled man with the smell of dog and cheap cologne.

Not until two days later did he have the surprise of seeing him again, this time less angry, but now dripping wet, caught in the torrential rain that had left the day stale and quiet. Hannibal greeted him with a smile as he bustled in the door and pushed his wet curly hair from his eyes: "Did he appreciate the loving bouquet?" Hannibal quipped, putting down his pen from marking up deliveries.

"I don't think he got the joke. Should've arranged them to spell it out like a funeral thing: would've made it crystal clear." This time the smile was genuine and it looked beautiful on him.

"Shame. I'll keep that in mind for next time you want to insult people through my flowers." That might have been a bit too harsh for what he intended: "What can I help you with today?" He straightened up fractionally, studying the man's fleeting, blinking eyes as he leant against the desk.

"What do you have that's a form of apology?" He met his eyes then, if only for a second, "Something about friendship." Hannibal considered him for a moment, watching him twitch.

"Yellow roses are-" Seemingly walking away yet again from their conversation, the man moved off to snatch up a yellow rose and bought it back to the counter, wordlessly placing it down. Hannibal was confused: "Would you like me to wrap it?"

"It's for you. To apologise for being an asshole before. I promise I'm not like that all the time- - only about- half." He gave an apologetic smile and a puzzled Hannibal turned charmed, "And it's Will, by the way. Will Graham. I realised I didn't even tell you that." Will scratched his neck nervously for a second before stuffing his hands in his pockets, trying his hardest to sustain eye contact. He couldn't deny that the man before him was captivating and he kicked himself for having to try so hard to show it.

Hannibal picked up the rose appreciatively, tapping it to his name tag: "Hannibal. A pleasure to meet you, Will."

"Likewise." Hannibal slipped the treasured flower into his waist-high apron pocket before gesturing for Will to wait as he disappeared from view to snip a little purple flower from it's bunch. He held it in the air with Will looking at him curiously before leaning over to allow him to place it behind his ear amongst the mess of rain soaked hair, "What is it?"

"A violet."

"I don't know what it means." Will took it out from behind his ear to admire it, looking from it to Hannibal like the answer would come to him.

"It means innocence and modesty." Will still looked a little skeptical, "And it can also be an invitation."

"To *what?*"

"Dinner. With me." Will cracked another smile that Hannibal found himself returning.

Will squinted, "Why dinner?"

"The best way to a man's heart is through his stomach, so I'm told." Will replaced the flower behind his ear and folded his arms on the counter, raising his eyebrows as he blew out his cheeks in feigned uncertainty.

"If I say yes, can you promise we only communicate with words? I'd rather not fork out to get more floral displays to say hide-and-go-fuck-yourself." Will quirked a brow, Hannibal grinning.

"I can. And I always keep my promises."

Will picked up the pen and started scribbling down his number before he'd even answered: "Well. Congratulations, you've got yourself a date." He tucked the pen in Hannibal's suit pocket and moved back: "Parting is such sweet sorrow, and all." Will pointed at him as he made his way to the door, swinging it open to let in the cold air.

"You are as cruel as you are cute, Mr. Graham. What's to be done about that?" Hannibal called after him.

Will barked a laugh and put on an overdramatic voice, "Goodbye, Hannibal."

"Goodbye, Will." He mimicked, and watched him leave, picking the rose from his apron to twirl it between his fingers.

Their relationship had made like a flower: bloomed.

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